

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND

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October 29, 2009

To: Carriers/Plan Administrators

HDS, Lynette Arakawa
HMA, Harris Nakamoto
HMSA, Rod Tam
informedRx, Nikki Bassett
Kaiser Permanente, Sandra Benevides
Royal State Insurance, Venus Gabuyo
Standard Insurance, Bonny Kahalewai
VSP, Monica Engle

From: Jim Williams, Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Williams".

Re: Assistance with Open Enrollment Processing

This is to follow up on my verbal request for assistance with processing of EUTF enrollment forms and related tasks. Below is a summary of the status of the EUTF Member Services Branch as of October 21, 2009 that was presented at the recent EUTF Board meeting. As Nicole Wong reported to the Board, our situation is dire. If you are able to provide assistance the staff assigned will be trained by EUTF staff on the specific tasks (imaging, indexing, data entry, etc.) needed. The preferred method of assistance would be through temporary hires obtained through an agency and assigned to the EUTF. If you would prefer to assign your own staff, we will need to work with the Attorney General's office on an agreement that addresses both confidentiality and potential conflicts of interest.

The EUTF can use assistance beginning November 9, 2009 through January 8, 2010. We ask that any personnel (temporary or employees) designated be assigned for a minimum of three consecutive weeks (four or more would be preferable). EUTF hours are 7:45 A.M. – 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday, except furlough days. If overtime is approved for EUTF staff, work also will be available on Saturdays. The EUTF is not able to provide parking.

I would appreciate a written response (e-mail or hard copy) from you indicating whether your company is able to assist the EUTF, and, if so, in what form that assistance can be provided. **Your company's provision of assistance is completely voluntary. There will be no negative impact on your company's status with the EUTF based on your response to this request.**

In addition, the EUTF would like to work with you to provide temporary medical plan carrier phone support from **11/2/09-01/31/09** Monday thru Friday from 7:45am to 4:30pm (except on furlough Fridays). The EUTF can set up 3 telephones [HMSA, HMA, Kaiser] in the Branch to auto route calls to carriers. The EUTF voicemail greeting would say something like "for assistance with HMSA benefit questions please press 4, for assistance with HMA....please press 5, for assistance with Kaiser...please press 6." There aren't enough phone extensions available to invite other plan carriers to participate. EUTF staff will have to transfer calls to those entities (informedRx, HDS, VSP, RSN, and Standard).

Thank you for considering this request.

Member Service Branch Status Report (10/21/09)

The Member Services Branch is focused on addressing an enormous and growing volume of documents that require action. Staff is faced with mounting workloads that are beyond the EUTF's current capacity to handle. Inadequate staffing levels and impending furloughs are cause for great concern. Any prolonged delay to forms processing affects prompt reporting of health and life insurance benefit eligibility to employee-beneficiaries, employers, insurance carriers, and health care providers. As of the date of this report, there are 2,999 forms awaiting processing, 454 forms waiting for scanning, and another 376 waiting to be indexed. Open enrollment activities for active employees and retirees are scheduled for the month of November with a forms deadline set for November 30, 2009. An estimated 10,000-15,000 forms are anticipated to arrive for processing. The Reduction in Force planned for mid-November will add a significant workload to the EUTF staff. An estimated 800-1,100 forms are anticipated to arrive for processing. The uncertainties of the current State budget have resulted in hundreds of employees to filing for a November or December 2009 retirement. An estimated 500 forms are anticipated to arrive for processing. The Dependent Eligibility Verification process will result in an immediate need to remove at least 1,237 ineligible dependents from coverage. This task is also scheduled for the month of November. Attention also needs to be placed on researching 7,155 Medicare Part B records. These beneficiaries may be erroneously terminated from plans by batch process in early December 2009 if not addressed timely. There are 6 employees in the Enrollment section. Customer Service support augments the work of the Enrollment staff to the extent possible. But the call center has been stretched to its limit and abandoned calls are on the rise. 205 voicemails have yet to be retrieved and responded to, resulting in daily inquiries from the Ombudsman's Office. There are 6 employees in the Customer Service section. The Branch is extremely challenged to provide even a minimally acceptable level of services to active employee, retirees, and their dependents.